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PROGRAM Good Morning America

STATION WJLA-TV  
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SUBJECT Interview with Vlahos and Suvorov

DAVID HARTMAN: Yesterday George Shultz, our Secretary of State announced that -- and I'm quoting -- at 18:26 Greenwich Mean Time, a Soviet pilot told ground control his target was destroyed.

Now, that is just one of the details that illustrates the precision with which, apparently, the United States can monitor secret Soviet military conversations. The jet was shot down in a region where the Soviets have strategic military installations not far from major commercial airline routes.

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HARTMAN: Michael Vlahos, former CIA employee, is now Director of Security Studies at Johns Hopkins University. He joins us from Washington. And Viktor Suvorov is a pseudonym, as a matter of fact. You won't see his face. His voice will be somewhat electronically disguised. He is a Russian defector, former Soviet military officer. He's written a book called "Inside the Soviet Army," and he joins us by satellite, live, from London.

Mr. Vlahos, first of all, why did it take so long for us to know that this plane was shot down?

MICHAEL VLAHOS: Well, there's a procedure whereby intelligence that's collected, whether by satellite imagery or signals intelligence, or what we call comment, interception of communication transmissions, message traffic, has to be sorted out. And there's so much, there's such a huge volume of this kind of intercepted messages coming in to the United States that the process of filtration and running it through a computer that